

## THE GREAT EXPEDITION.

## Important Intelligence Received from Rebel Sources.

## Successful Fight of the Union Fleet with Rebel Batteries.

## The Rebel Guns Silenced and Dismounted.

## The Inlets Leading to Charleston and Savannah Blocked.

## Reported Desperate Fight at Beaufort, S. C.

## The South Carolinians Call for More Troops.

## ANOTHER SKETCH OF COM. TATNALL, &amp;c., &amp;c., &amp;c.

BALTIMORE, Nov. 12, 1861. The Old Point boat brings but little news. Another flag of truce, sent from Norfolk yesterday, brought down reports that after the capture of the batteries the rebels fell back to Beaufort, where a most desperate struggle took place.

There was terrible excitement at Norfolk.

The following additional particulars are from the Charleston Mercury of Friday, November 8:

In anticipation of the arrival of the great expedition, the rebels have been engaged in erecting batteries upon a point at Hilton's Head, on the neck of land.

The principal fortification on Hilton's Head was dismantled. Fort Walker, and situated on low land, partially concealed by trees and underbrush. Adjoining it were other batteries of smaller size, but so connected as to prove a formidable bar to the entrance of vessels.

Fort Beaufort or Beaufort was of considerable importance, having been mounted with heavy guns. The garrison are supposed to have been South Carolina regiments, assisted by additional regiments which were sent from Richmond.

The batteries at Bay Point, on Jenkins Island, opposite Hilton's Head, were equally as formidable. Inside of Fort Royal entrance, and behind the batteries, lay the fleet of Commodore Tatnall, which consisted only of small vessels, carrying a few heavy guns, but principally light ones. Tugs constituted a great portion of the fleet.

Many of these remained outside the mouth of the entrance until the arrival of our fleet, when they formed in miniature line of battle, in the position already stated, behind the guns of their own forts and across the entrance.

On the morning of Thursday last the United States fleet, consisting of forty-two vessels, headed by the flag-ship, approached the mouth of Fort Royal entrance. This was at half-past nine o'clock. Several of the transports remained off the coast. The approach of the great fleet created a great stir in the rebel batteries. Upon writing at a suitable position, the guns of the fleet opened a continuous fire upon Fort Walker and Beaufort, as well as those upon Bay Point. Under cover of this fire an effort was made to run the gauntlet of the batteries, the result of which was eminently satisfactory.

A number of the vessels passed through the shot and shell from the shore batteries with very trifling injuries. At least fifteen of them succeeded in passing up the entrance beyond the reach of the land batteries.

As the Union fleet sailed up, the mosquito fleet of Commodore Tatnall moved in, but being the impossibility of making any resistance soon dispersed, and some were forced to run on shore, while others were driven up the inlets almost out of sight.

Commodore Tatnall went on shore with his men to assist in working the batteries and use them against the vessels of the Union fleet, which were endeavoring to follow the advance Union force.

It must not be imagined, however, that the passage of the fleet through the channel was the work of a moment. It was not accomplished until the firing had continued from half-past nine o'clock in the morning to nearly five o'clock in the evening.

During the light one of the Union gunboats is believed to have been burned and three transports disabled.

It is acknowledged by the enemy that they had twenty men killed in Fort Walker; but it is impossible to state what their loss was at the other batteries, although doubtless very great, as our fire is mentioned as having been very effective, the guns being very well aimed and of heavy calibre.

No sooner did our vessels pass the batteries at Fort Royal entrance, and slide into what is termed Broad river, than they made for the mouths of the inlets leading to Beaufort, Savannah and Charleston. These they immediately blocked, although not in time to prevent the escape of some small rebel vessels.

Not one of the Federal vessels was sunk, and the only one believed to have been destroyed by the fire was a gunboat referred to above. The burning of this is described as being a grand spectacle, the guns going off as the flames reached them, and throwing the shells far into the woods on shore. The crew are said to have passed through a murderous fire to another vessel; but they escaped with very little if any loss.

The Union vessels acted under special instructions in at once blocking the inlets which lead to most important points, and which afforded loopholes of escape to the enemy. While a portion of the fleet, however, entered upon this duty, four ships made at once for Beaufort, and at three o'clock on Thursday afternoon, November 7, these vessels were in sight of the town.

A despatch dated Beaufort, November 7, to the Charleston Mercury, says that at the time designated the Union force were preparing to effect a landing, evidently with the design of throwing up intrenchments and attacking the town.

We have no means of knowing the exact loss of the Union force, but the rebels confess that their own garrison was very bad and their artillerymen badly in want of practice. They declare, moreover, that the guns in the forts were not properly mounted.

When Commodore Tatnall went to assist the men in the forts, he found that many of them were actually dismounted by their own rebound. To this fact the rebel journals attribute their defeat, and loudly call upon the Confederate government to find out where the blame rests.

THE LATEST REBEL DESPATCH.

The following is a special despatch to the Charleston Mercury:

HEAVENSBURY, Nov. 7.—P. M.

The practice of our artillery at Hilton's Head has been very bad, hence the successful passing of seven of the enemy's men-of-war. Their transports are still outside. The loss on our side thus far has been very light, and the troops are in good heart. The firing of the Yankee vessels was very accurate. Hilton's Head and Bay Point, as at first reported, received the brunt of the attack. Our failure to sink any of the vessels which passed our batteries is owing to the poor practice of the artillerymen.

The enemy's ships which have passed our batteries can be distinctly seen from Beaufort. Fort Walker and Beaufort are still firing.

The enemy has lost one gunboat, which was burned. Shells can be seen from here bursting in the woods.

Our lines of communication are completely cut off, unless more troops are sent here with artillery and cavalry.

Four ships are now in sight over the canal and up as far as Skull creek.

There is reason to believe that the enemy are now making preparations to land a large force at Hilton's Head to-night or to-morrow morning.

THE EFFECT OF THE NEWS IN CHARLESTON.

The Charleston Mercury of the 8th inst., after summing up the results, says:—

In the promiscuous chase the Yankees seem to have driven Commodore Tatnall's mosquito fleet up the creeks leading to Savannah, and cut off all water communication with Charleston by hermetically sealing Skull creek.

Although the Yankees have effected, at no landing, it is certain that they have made some progress, and it is believed that they will be able to send reinforcements as they may be needed to checkmate any movement they may make towards gaining even a small foothold upon our soil. If the invaders can take Charleston with twenty-five thousand men, then have it, as we would be unworthy to possess it, and it will be a fit memorial to aid in the cause of our own Southern liberty.

NEWS STOPPED BY THE REBELS.

A telegraphic despatch, which left Richmond on Saturday, Nov. 9, stated that there was nothing particularly important on the Southern coast. It is evident from this that the rebel government has prohibited any further information from coming north of Richmond, and this course implies that they have suffered a heavy defeat.

NEWS BY WAY OF PORTLAND, ME.

PORTLAND, Me., Nov. 12, 1861.

The bark C. B. Hamilton, Capt. Chase, arrived at this port yesterday and reports as follows:—

Off Charleston, on the 2d inst., passed eight war and transport steamers and eight sailing vessels, including the Great Republic.

The steamers were heading westward and the sailing vessels were lying to, with their heads to the southward.

The same day passed a disabled steamer, with a steam-er lying by and firing at her. Supposed that the latter was trying to sink the former, as she was in the track of homeward bound vessels. [Probably the steamer Governor, before reported in company with the gunboat Isaac Smith.—Ed. Herald.]

Capt. Chase thinks the fleet must have had fine weather for landing on Monday.

NO SIGNS OF ANY STEAMER FROM THE FLEET AT ANNAPOLIS.

ANNAPOLIS, Md., Nov. 12, 1861.

A despatch received from Annapolis says that no half past eleven o'clock this forenoon there was no sign of any steamer coming up from the great fleet.

THE ARRIVAL OF A STEAMER BEARING DESPATCHES FROM THE GOVERNMENT FLEET IS MOST CONFIDENTLY EXPECTED TO-MORROW.

The arrival of a steamer bearing despatches from the government fleet is most confidently expected to-morrow morning. The landing of our troops probably took place on the 8th inst., and supposing the departure of the steamer had been delayed until Sunday, she is already over due at this point. The moment she arrives in the bay she will be boarded by a tug, and despatches immediately sent to the Northern press.

THE LATEST FROM WASHINGTON.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 12, 1861.

There is no official information received here of the movements of the expedition. Captain Dupont, the naval commander, was instructed to send a steamer to Annapolis as soon as he had accomplished a landing, but it is supposed that in view of the fact that five or six of his transports have been wrecked, disabled or obliged to put back, that if he has met with any considerable amount of opposition, he will not venture to allow any of his vessels to leave, simply to bring the news of his movements, until he is sure he can spare it.

The news received from the different rebel sources harmonizes, and is believed, especially that received yesterday via Cairo, Memphis and Savannah. The government have no doubt that the first vessel from the expedition will bring prisoners, if not some of our own wounded.

THE REBEL COMMANDER AT PORT ROYAL.

Additionally to what we gave of the career of Commodore Tatnall, the commander at Port Royal, one of the Boston papers publishes the following:—

Commodore Tatnall, who is reported to be the commander of the rebel forces at Beaufort, Nov. 4, is an old officer of the United States Navy, appointed from Georgia. He was considered an experienced and skilful officer, and has held some very responsible positions. He was in command of the United States fleet in China at the time the allied French and English made the attack on the Chinese forts. On that occasion he suffered his feelings to lead him into the strife, and was very much complimented by the English for the assistance he rendered on the Chinese side. He was afterwards promoted to the rank of Commodore. When news of this traitor's attempt to desert to the rebels was received, the government was much surprised. Tatnall was a man of high standing in the navy, and his defection was a great blow to the Union cause.

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